containers made of jicara (*boch*) or tecomate (*tzu*). In the bedroom is a bed (*uaybal*) made of boards placed on four forked poles, usually with a sleeping mat on it. Only the very poor sleep on mats on the floor. Small chairs, wooden chests for clothes, baskets of all shapes and sizes, pita bags and nets, shelves made of wood ribs, and pegs for hanging clothes are scattered around the hut without order.

The most important article is the altar with the family cross. Its construction varies in different areas: it may be a plain small table made of tree trunks or better material. The altar is generally ornamented with pine needles. Occasionally, the figure of a saint is placed by the cross.

Clothing and Ornaments

Each community has its own style of clothing, which gives a sense of unity to its members and permits the observer to identify easily the groups during fiestas or market days. This variety applies only to a few items of clothing, which is basically the same for the entire region. Men's costume consists of short pants (*uesh*) and a long shirt (*nátil-kú*) which reaches the knee, both made of cloth that women weave; a red sash or belt (*chuj-chut*) of cotton, 10–15 cm. wide by 1.5 m. long; a palm hat (*pishol*); and leather sandals (*shanabil*). Residents of cold areas wear a woolen chamarra which is manufactured by the Chamulas. Women's costume consists of a skirt made of wool (*tzek*) or blue thick cloth, made in one piece and wrapped around the body with two pleats in front; it is belted at the waist by a red wool sash, which the Chamulas manufacture. Occasionally, they wear a wool rebozo. They tie their hair with a red woolen ribbon (*malal*) and wear earrings (*yulel-chikinil*) and glass necklaces (*ual*) bought in the city. Women always go barefoot, even during long trips. When outdoors they cover their heads with a cloth or wool fabric.

Each municipio has made of these clothes

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
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123 Visiting such a house is not a mere, simple social affair. Here,
648 on a steep-sided and slippery natural hill, lived a family belonging to a notoriously exclusive people. Our hostess seemed suspicious of the visit at first, although one visitor was a "Melicano," one of the pair who had already acquired a good reputation with the Indians, and his guide, Señor Aguilar, was known to be a friend. Men in felt hats and boots seldom visited those houses for good purposes; at the best, they might be expected to make off with a quantity of eggs and tortillas without paying their value—at the worst, the head of the house might be haled away for forced labour, or there might be a fight, the pigs killed, and the little hut set afire. The family consisted of a married couple their small son, and two grown girls. On our first visit the wife alone was there. She was at first sullen and a little frightened, but becoming reassured by degrees, showed herself to be a placid, dignified woman, pleasant, neat, and in many ways an ideal type of the traditional housewife. After we had given medicine to one of the girls for cold, and to the husband for mild fever, with a gaudy chromo of a saint to decorate the family altar, they came [342] to take us for granted, and allowed us to see unfolding the harmonious, dignified family life, with its feeling of unvoiced yet real affection that is so typical of the American Indian where European contact has been slight. The 342 little house, only half walled, and small—about 15 x 18½ feet—was [353] always neat, its dirt floor swept clean, each small posession in its [356] place. There was a faint smell of wood-smoke and earth, with the scent of the rich jungle drifting in, the sound of low-voiced talk, wind in grass, or the grind and thump of the metates, now and then laughter.

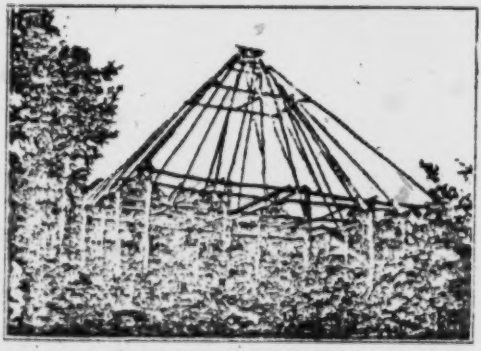

Fig. 287—Cancuc, Chis. Frame of house, illustrating type used in whole area.

The house was a rectangle, 4.90 x 4.20 meters (figs. 288-289), the front of the house being on a short side. The back and slightly less than half of the sides were walled with close-planted, upright [352] poles, without plastering. To wooden beds, *waixyivel*, like low tables, were built into the corners thus framed. Four corner-posts,

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Bachajón

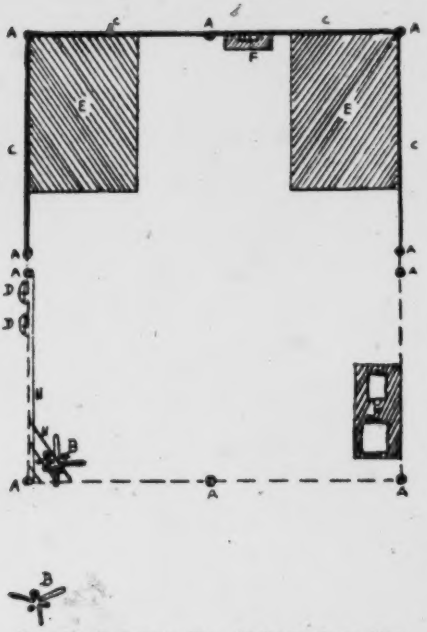

FIG. 288—El Encanto, Chis. Bachajon House. Plan. (Scale 1:100).

A. Uprights, kuk'up.
B. Fire.
C. Wall, p'ahk.
D. Rat Trap.
E. Beds.
F. Altar.
G. Table with Metates.
H. Racks.

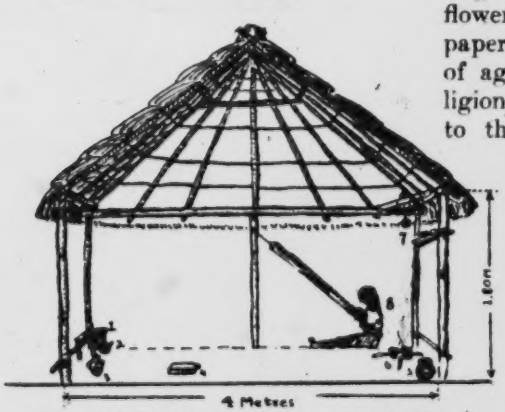

FIG. 289—El Encanto, Chis. Section of Bachajon House.

1. Table, ahk'en, with Metates.
2. Basket of clay, tzavek lum.
3. Tenango water jar, k'ip.
4. Squatting chair, tsamate.
5. Olla, ocom.
6. Fire, kak'.
7. Racks, bartet, with packages.
8. Woman weaving.

a central front and back post, and two posts close together on each side at the ends of the walls, supported the roof-beams. There were no horizontal members save the plates, following the line of the eaves. The rafters were built up from these direct to the ridge-pole, joined by light cross pieces, or thatching-poles, laid on outside. Near the top they were braced by a purlin of heavy logs on the inside. From floor to eaves it was 1.80 meters, and about the same from eaves to the ridge-pole. The floor was of hard dirt, fairly well levelled, and well swept. We were told that situations on hills, such as this, are commonly chosen to assure drainage, and that there is no orientation.

The altar, a table and a large cross decorated with flowers, pine-tips, and bits of paper, which will be spoken of again when discussing religion, was placed at the back to the right of the middle post. In front, to the right, was the table, *ahk'en*, on which were two metates, or grinding stones. They were legless, one end being raised slightly by propping with stones. The finer one was called *skaltca-tut* ("metate-small"), it was made of a fine, sandy lime-

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Bachajón

stone, *ton-al-ha'*, ("water stone"). The other, *skaltca-muk* ("big metate") was made of an igneous stone called *hayáltcak*, brought from San Martín. The *manos*, or smaller stones used for grinding on these, were called *miscabtca* (fig. 290). To the left, opposite this table, was the fire, *kak'*, built of two broken ollas and two small rocks, placed so that the logs could be laid star-fashion between them, and close enough together to support the tortilla griddle or an olla (fig. 291). Outside the house was another fire, with only three stones, on which was drying a basket full of *pinole*, *tcilim*, a fruit which is mixed with cacao in a form of chocolate. Over the house fireplace racks, *baxtet*, were placed at the level of the eaves across the corner, and along the wall to the middle post, that things hung up there might be protected by the smoke from insects. All these things are indicated in the plan.

FIG. 290—Table with Metates.

A hammock, *aktci*, which we understood was not of native make, hung across the middle of the house. Two woven mats, *pOp*, the Spanish *petate*, lay on the beds. Beside this, the beds, and the table, the only thing that could properly be called furniture was a three-legged stool about 30 centimeters high, *matsumte*. Two mats of pounded bark, or tapa, *bat-te* ("bark tree"), or *bat manil tcahan*, were rolled up in a corner. First comers got the hammock to lie in, others sat on the low "squatting seats," *tsamate*, of which there were three, made each of half a log, peeled, and partially flattened on top, with a handle on one end.

The tortilla griddle was a flat, dish-like pottery affair, about 40 centimeters in diameter. There were five ollas, *ŏcom*, with plain

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
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necks and round bottoms. Two were full of corn and lime for tortillas, just off the fire. A big Tenango jar, *k'ip,* of the kind to be described at that place, was used for water.

A pottery dish, about 7 centimeters across, *tsets,* is commonly offered to guests to wash their hands. It is placed on a pottery stand of an hour-glass shape, about 15 centimeters high, *awaliko* (see fig. 299). The ordinary plates and general vessels are flat gourd dishes, *qai',* about 20 centimeters across. Gourds as well were used for a dipper, *tuts,* and a water-jar, *tsux.* Two nets hung from the rack. There were three small baskets, *tutemotc,* and four big ones, *mukulmotc.* Hanging on the wall were a pair of the basket-work sandals mentioned before, and selected ears of corn for seed. The wife's textile outfit, more fully described later, consisted of a spindle, *pětět,*

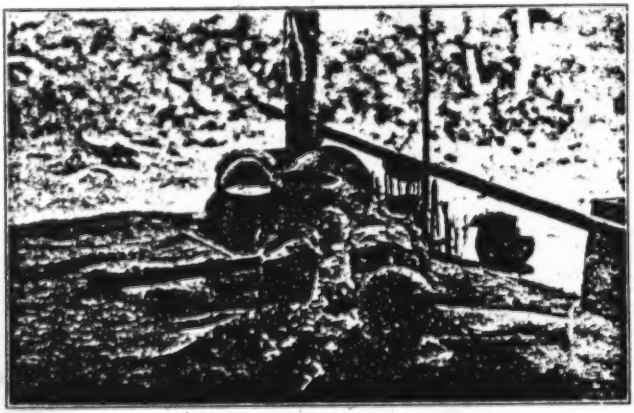

FIG. 291—Bachajon Fireplace.

with clay whorl, spun in a gourd bowl, *tsima,* cotton, *t'umin,* hanging in leaves, and the loom itself, *holěl.* A sling, made of a forked stick and rubber band with a leather piece to take the clay pellet, *finmutc,* belonged to the small boy. Bananas were drying on the rack. With them were laid, or hanging in packages of leaves, beeswax, *tcavek,* blocks, 20 x 20 x 2 centimeters, for trade purposes, used for making candles, a lump of hard red clay, *baq lum* ("bitter earth"), for washing the hair, and sometimes also eaten, a package of brown loaf sugar, salt, *atsam,* traded down from the Zotzil country, several packages of pimiento pepper, and serpent fat, *junto tcan,* for rubbing on the chest to cure coughs. Under the table was a basket of coarse, blackish-gray clay for making pottery, *tcavek lum* ("beeswax earth"). Five wild boars' jaws and an armadillo's tail

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
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Five wild boars' jaws and an armadillo's tail hung in the eaves so that the dogs might see them, to prevent their going away or losing heart. A swizzle stick, *mahas,* about 40 centimeters long, was used for stirring cocoa. It is made by cutting a twig above a joint with four branches. Two rat traps, *yakul,* just outside the hut, were exact models of the larger deadfalls used for jaguars (see fig. 308).

Add to this the clothes on the inhabitants backs, and the man's machete, and you will have a complete list of the worldly possessions, large and small, of a Bachajon family—altogether some forty-four different kinds of things. We assembled as many together as possible, arranging them as for a feast, and placed in the middle the small son of the house, and a little monkey of a boy, Miguel, who accompanied us to run errands (fig. 292).

Fig. 292—Bachajon boy guests.

If mud-plastered walls are added to this description, you have a typical Ocosingo Valley house. Change the grass roof to palm, it is the kind to be seen in the jungle country.

At Muxculja (*muckul ha,* "Covered Water"), in the jungle, our Indians built us a trail shelter or hut of the type called in Spanish *champa,* and in Tzeltal *tutna',* "small house." This enabled us to note the manner of building the frame-work and laying on the roof. The kind of *champa* built for us, with an A-roof and gable ends, is called *gwakac na',* "cow house"; the more common type built by the Indians when alone, a simple lean-to, is called *lestce-pat* (should be *lestce-pahk?*) "only one wall."

Our shelter being more than usually pretentious, we could observe most of the steps in building a true house, although, of course, the form here was different and the construction much lighter (figs. 293-294). It was three meters, fifty-one centimeters long by three meters wide, two meters high at the ridge-pole, one at the eaves. It had no walls. From the construction of the outline of the frame to the completed thatching it took fifty minutes for four men, later only two, working without haste.

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Cancuc

that he was invited into her house, presumably to take shelter from the evening rain that was beginning to fall. The house, of which he sketched a hurried plan (fig. 324) was more rectangular than is usual, the prevailing type being square with a pyramidal roof. He entered through a low doorway, closed with a wooden door on leather hinges. Although the ridge of the roof was high, the many cross poles reaching from the top of one wall to the other made it necessary to stoop. The writer squatted by the door, facing the fire, which smoked merrily in the closed room. The old woman immediately set to shaping a pile of tortillas for baking. Along either wall was a well-made bench, decorated with notches along the top and geometric designs on the back, similar to the benches on the Cabildo porch (fig. 325). These and a sturdy table that was stored on top of the stringers were said to be purely local products. By the door stood a big jar, a full meter in height, crude and undecorated (fig. 326). There was the usual collection of ollas and gourds, and one other new form, an open-mouthed pot about eight centimeters high and as many in diameter, flat bottomed, with a handle on one side, called *hütc* (fig. 327). In the thick smoke, it was hard to see anything. I was interested to note that my hostess' eyes watered nearly as much as my own. In the darker end of the house I could make out corn stacked neatly along one wall, and a partition that presumably hid the beds. For a while the woman answered the few questions that I could make her understand by means of signs, my half-a-dozen words of Tzeltal,

FIG. 323—Cancuc, Chis. Drinking scaffold.

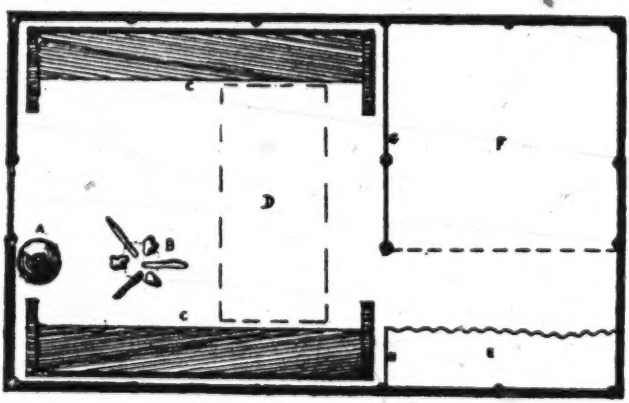

FIG. 324—Cancuc, Chis. Plan of House.

7t Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

square. Although this conception is contradicted by knowledge learned in school, the two concepts are not brought into direct opposition. The town still defines the outer limit of most meaningful social relations, and most people are not forced by the circumstances of their lives to deal with an understanding of the world as round. It is enough that the four "sides" of their village be protected by crosses at the points of entry. The important orientation points are the east, referred to as the "coming out of the sun," and the west, referred to as "the sleeping place of the sun." North and south are referred to as lowland and highland because of the topography. Compass orientation is important behaviorally only at death. The body of the deceased is laid out in the cemetery with the head to the east. Indians comment that the Ladinos lay the body out with the head to the west, but Indians of other towns, such as Zinacantan, also do so. The cemetery is located on the western side of the town.

The House

The reference to the house in prayer as "the entry to suffering, inside the poverty" suggests the "cult of poverty" which Wolf (1955:459) points out as characteristic of closed corporate Indian communities. Most people conform to a standard house size of five square meters subdivided into an interior sleeping and living area and a porch (Fig. 8). The walls are made of mud strengthened with lime packed in a framework of poles supported on nine main posts. The roofs are pitched with four sheds rising steeply to a truncated ridge. Tiles are used in most new houses to cover the roof, but there are still many thatched palm or wooden shingle roofs. Corn and beans are stored in the rafters under the eaves of the house.

Inside the house, beds line the two side walls. If there is no cooking shack separate from the house, the hearth is placed in the center of the interior room. The grinding stone, raised on three posts, is placed to the left of the center post.

The porch is the area for ceremonial gatherings and for making and storing pottery. A table with the pictures of household saints set against the inside wall, is adorned with flowers and candles. During house fiestas, men sit on the benches lining the four walls of the porch, while the women sit inside in a semicircle.

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

come the domain of the schoolmaster, who represents federal influence in the local community. He has rebuilt parts of the structure in the thirteen years he and his family have lived and worked in this building; it was his fortress when the Indians threatened to kill him for building a chicken coop obtruding into the street, and again when he interceded in a case of homicide. He has a small arsenal stored in his bedroom in preparation for any reversal of his position in the community. The school is his platform, the area he controls and from which he shouts to his compadres—the storekeeper, the fiscal, and the president—to come speak with him.

The long building is subdivided into four classrooms and the living quarters of the schoolmaster's family. The classrooms are furnished with crude benches and tables; blackboards and charts of birds, animals, and the alphabet decorate the walls. The back porch, converted to classrooms to accommodate the three hundred and fifty children, overflows with benches. The students' own materials—a notebook, pencil, and erasers—are provided by their parents. When a notebook is filled, the students industriously erase all the marks and reuse the book until it falls apart.

When I was in the village, the schoolmaster often encouraged visitors to share a Coca-Cola with him in his office. Here, surrounded by his books, his collection of artifacts of both genuine and spurious origin, a picture of the district inspector of federal schools pinning a medal on his chest, the flag of the Mexican republic, he could speak freely of the personal attacks and frustrations and of the rare satisfactions he encountered "in bringing civilization to the town." As he began to build up his political power in the community, the president and síndico often consulted with him on town affairs. Agents of the federal or departmental offices who came to town frequently communicated with him directly before going to the cabildo. The school became the arena for working out political programs and strategies. The schoolmaster prided himself on being the primary channel of communication between the outside world and the village.

The conflict of interest between the schoolmaster and the parents of the children over attendance in school has been ameliorated in recent years with the acceptance by some of the parents of education as an advantage. In the early years of compulsory education, physical force was used to round up the children. The traumatic experience of his first day in school

9:Nash E-5 (1964) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
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male helpers who are usually wives of the *balnialetik*, or widows who are part of the official's or his wife's family. A fourth group are visitors who come to congratulate the new official. Particularly conspicuous because of their Ladino or non-Indian clothing in the house of the president (Chart 6) were the visitors from the outlying rancherías and colonias of Tzoʔontahal.

Validation in the household setting takes place in two scenes. The first occurs on the eve of New Year. Each new official entertains in his house the men he has chosen as his *nakawanehetik* and as his *balnialetik*. Only those *balnialetik* who are immediately related come to this gathering. The *meʔil kʼop*, 'woman speaker,' is present along with the wives of the *balnialetik* (Chart 2). The house is decorated with pine needles and juniper boughs in the afternoon. The visitors arrive with wood and pitchpine to light the house at about eight in the evening and stay until the liquor is finished. Drinking order is from elder to younger, which coincides with the prestige ranking. The *nakawanehetik* are served, then the *nicʼanil*.

The second household gathering takes place on the morning of the New Year. Major settings for such gatherings are the house of the first judge and the house of the new president. It is the duty of the fourth regidor to assemble the three other regidores, and of the assistant judge to assemble the other judges. The two groups, regidores and judges, meet in the first judge's house. They join the president at his house and then proceed to the townhall. The group of five police from *ahkʼolnantik* meet separately in the house of the first police of that side, and those of *alannantik* meet in the house of their first police.

The assembled officials proceed to the townhall, announcing with rockets to the policemen that they have left. Gathered in the townhall, referred to in the formal address or *patʔotʼan* as the *sik na*, 'cold house,'[9] are the 'old officials' *(kʼa huʼeletik)* along with the alfereces and the principáles. They enter two by two, the president and síndico first, followed by the two first judges, the assistant judges, and the judges of the barrios and colonias. They kneel and 'measure their noses' *(spʼis sniʔik,)* as they enter, showing respect to the holy banners which the alferecos have delivered from the church.

[9] Bunzel (1952, p. 377) translates a formal speech in which the townhall of Chichicastenango is referred to as that "cold house, the icy house," but the Quiche word is not included. The pattern of double synonyms for nouns is present in these Quiche formal texts as in the Tzeltal.

[P 217-A]

9:Nash E-5 (1964) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Tzo?ontahal

APPENDIX 1 — CHANGE OF OFFICIALS IN THE TOWNHALL

	QUESTION	INFORMANT 3 GENERAL DESCRIPTION	INFORMANT 2 CASE: ENTRY OF FIRST JUDGE	OBSERVATION CASE: JANUARY 1, 1965
*621 124 796	1. When do they change the officials?	On January 1, *?ač ha?bil* (New Year)	First of January	I observed the preparations for the New Year change of office fiesta in the houses of the president and of the new first policeman on December 31, 1964, and January 1, 1965
	2. What do they do first on the fiesta of changing of officials?	They arrange the house of each official	The wife of the first judge puts the bean tortillas on the fire	
[252]	3. When do they do this?	In the afternoon of December 31	In the morning of the last day of December	The women spend most of the morning and afternoon making the bean tortillas
[353]	4. How do they arrange the house?	They get juniper boughs and needles and put them in the house		Around 8 P.M. the visitors arrive. The house is decorated with pine needles on the floor and in the yard, and there are branches of juniper nailed to the posts of the house entry, just as it is done at the entry to the townhall. I was not present at the gathering
[602]	5. Who helps her?		All her relatives (*kermanotak*) with neighbors (see Chart 1)	
	6. What do they do in the afternoon?		The women eat	
*621 124 796	7. What time do the guests gather in the house of the new officials?	On December 31 at 7 P.M.		
574	8. What do they bring?	They arrive with wood and pitchpine	They bring wood or pitchpine	
[262] [262]	9. What do the visitors do?	They drink coffee with bread and bean tortillas	They say greetings. They drink coffee and eat bean tortillas	
[273]	10. What do they do when they finish the coffee?	They drink liquor	They take out liquor, and the judge recites the benediction	
*621 124 796 [693]	11. Who is present in the house of the new official?		*natal nakawane*, his leading house official, Baltol Kantiren. The new judge, Santos Kantiron, *balnial*, assistants to pass gruel, sons of the new officials *?ak s?etik*: wood bringers (see Chart 2)	
[624]	12. What do they do first on New Year's day?	The fourth regidor calls everyone together	The fourth regidor raises all the new officials	